

The Life of Pi: book review

Seven million readers can't be wrong. What makes *The Life of Pi* so special?

The book and its author

The Life of Pi tells the story of Pi, a teenage boy from India, who finds himself trapped in a lifeboat in the Pacific Ocean with a tiger. It is the third book by the Canadian author Yann Martel, and was published in 2001. It has sold seven million copies worldwide, won several prizes and been translated into 41 languages. Yann Martel is the son of a diplomat and spent his childhood in Costa Rica, Canada, France and Mexico. After finishing university in Canada, he spent two years travelling round India and then decided to be a writer.

The plot

At the start of the book, we learn about Pi's childhood in Pondicherry in India. His father owns the city zoo and the family home is in the zoo. When they aren't at school, Pi and his brother help their father at the zoo and he learns a lot about animals. Pi is very interested in religion. His family are Hindu, but he is curious about Christianity and Islam too and decides to believe in all three religions.

When Pi is 16, his parents decide to close the zoo and move to Canada. They sell some of the animals to zoos in North America and the family travel by ship to Canada taking the animals with them. On the way, there is a terrible storm and the ship sinks. Sadly, Pi's family and the sailors all die in the storm, but Pi lives and finds himself in a lifeboat with a hyena, zebra, orang-utan and an enormous tiger. At first, Pi is scared of the animals and jumps into the ocean. Then he remembers there are sharks in the water and decides to climb back into the lifeboat. One by one, the animals in the lifeboat kill and eat each other, till only Pi and the tiger are left alive. Luckily for Pi, there is some food and water on the lifeboat, but he soon needs to start catching fish. He feeds the tiger to stop it killing and eating him. He also uses a whistle and his knowledge of animals to control the tiger and show it that he's boss.

Pi and the tiger spend 227 days in the lifeboat. They live through terrible storms and the burning heat of the Pacific sun. They are often hungry and ill. Sometimes, Pi finds comfort in his three religions, but sometimes he feels sad and lonely. Finally, they arrive at the coast of Mexico, but you will have to read the book to find out what happens in the end!

The life of Pie

Warm- up

Today we are going to learn about a book, *The Life of Pie*, which was turned into a film. Ask each other in pairs.

What type of books do you like to read? Have you ever seen a film based on a book?

Before reading

A. Watch the *Life of Pi* trailer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mMN693-F3U> and answer the following questions in pairs.

- *What do you think the story is about?*.....
- *Do you think this story is realistic or fantasy? Why?*
- *Would you like to read the book?*.....

While Reading

B. You have 2 minutes to read the text quickly. Don't read every word — just look for the main idea. Then answer the questions and check your answers in pairs.

1. What type of text is this?
a. Story b. Review c. Article d. Poem
2. What is the book mainly about?
a. A boy who travels with animals
b. A boy who goes to school
c. A family living in Canada
d. A tiger living in a zoo
3. How do you think the story feels? Choose two:
a. exciting b. funny c. scary d. sad e. boring f. magical

C. Read the text more carefully You don't need to understand every sentence — just find the answers.

1. Country where Pi is from: _____
2. Pi's family job: _____
3. How old is Pi when they travel? _____
4. What animals are in the lifeboat?

5. What dangers does Pi face during his journey? (Name at least one)

6. _____

7. How many days does Pi spend in the lifeboat? _____

8. Where does Pi finally arrive? _____

D. Discuss the following questions. (Ask each other in pairs)

1. *What did you learn about Pi's life before the shipwreck?*

2. *Which part of the story is most interesting or surprising? Why?*

3. *How do you think Pi felt during the storm?*

4. *Should this book be recommended to teenagers? Explain.*

Use **follow-up questions** like: "Why do you think so?" / "Can you give an example?"

E. Homework: Write a short infographic for The Life of Pie. Find the format in E-class, messages

F. Self- evaluation. Think about today's lesson and complete the following sentences.

Today I learned that... _____

Next time, I want to improve... _____

I enjoyed the lesson because... _____